

THE CHANCE GOD GIVES.

"I'll pass this way but once," a fool cried out.
 "And therefore I will laugh and take my ease;
 Let others toll and sweat and fret and doubt,
 And miss the chance God gives them, if they please—
 But I will journey down the careless ways
 And open my eyes to none but happy days."
 "I'll pass this way but once," another said.
 "Hence all that God laid out for me to do
 I must be doing as I fare ahead.
 That he may say: 'Well done,' when I am through—
 By word and deed I'll do my best to spread
 Good cheer along the pathways that I tread."
 The wise man did his work and did it well,
 And people blessed him as he went along.
 And fewer tears, because he labored, fell
 And higher swelled the chorus of the song—
 The song of joy God meant that men should raise,
 The splendid song of brotherhood and praise.
 The useless fool went dawdling here and there,
 Unmindful of all feelings but his own;
 What if men sang or sobbed? He didn't care—
 One morn he woke to find all pleasures flown!
 His tongue was thick and dry—he cursed his lot—
 And shriveled up—and passed—and was forgot.
 —S. E. Kiser, in Chicago Record-Herald.



CHAPTER IX.—CONTINUED.

"Well, now, Miss Ray, don't you think it was most discourteous, most ungentlemanly, in him to send such a message?" demanded a flushed and indignant young woman, one of the most energetic of the sisterhood, as they stood together on the promenade deck in the shade of the canvas awnings, shunning the glare of the August sun.
 "Are you sure such a message was sent?" was the serious reply.
 "Sure? Why, certainly he did! and by his own servant, too," was the wrathful answer. "Didn't he, Miss Porter?"
 And Miss Porter, the damsel appealed to, and one of the two nurses who sent in their message from the office, promptly assented. Miss Ray looked unconvinced.
 "Servants, you know, sometimes deliver messages that were never sent," she answered, with quiet decision.
 "We have seen quite a little of that in the army, and it is my father's rule to get all the facts before passing judgment. My brother thought Mr. Stuyvesant's attendant garrulous and meddlesome."
 "But I asked him if he was sure that was what Mr. Stuyvesant said," persisted Miss Porter, bridling, "and he answered they were just the very words."

"And still I doubt his having sent them as a message," said Miss Ray, with slight access of color, and that evening she walked the deck long with a happy subaltern and added to her unpopularity.
 There were several well-informed and unpleasant women, maids and matrons both, in the little sisterhood, but somehow "the boys" did not show such avidity to walk or chat with them as they did with Miss Ray. She sorely wanted a talk with Sandy that evening, but the Belgic had come in from Frisco only six hours before they sailed and huge bags of letters and papers were transferred from her to the Sacramento.

There were letters for Maidie and Sandy both—several—but there was one bulky missive for him that she knew to be from her father, from far-away Tampa, and the boy had come down late to dinner. They had seats at the table of the commanding officer, a thing Maidie had really tried to avoid, as she felt that it discriminated, somehow, against the other nurses, who, except Mrs. Dr. Wells, their official head, were distributed about the other tables, but the major had long known and loved her father, and would have it so. This night, their first out from Honolulu, he had ordered wine-glasses on the long table and champagne served, and when dinner was well-nigh over noticed for the first time that Ray had turned his glass down.

"Why, Sandy," he cried, impulsively, "it is just 22 years ago this summer that your father made the ride of his life through the Indian lines to save Wayne's command on the Cheyenne. Now, there are just 22 of us here at table, and I wanted to propose his health and promotion. Won't you join us?"

The boy colored to the roots of his dark hair. His eyes half filled. He choked and stammered a moment and then—back went the head with the old, familiar toss that was so like his father, and through his set lips Sandy bravely spoke:

"Can't, major. I swore off—to-day!"

"All right, my boy, that ends it!" answered the major, heartily, while Marion, her eyes brimming, barely touched her lips to the glass, and longed to be on Sandy's side of the table that she might steal a hand to him in love and sympathy and sisterly pride. But he avoided even her when dinner was over, and was busy, he sent word, with troop papers down between-decks, and she felt, somehow, that that letter was at the bottom of his sudden resolution and longed to see it, yet could not ask.

At three bells, half-past nine, she saw him coming quickly along the promenade deck, and she stopped her escort and held out a detaining hand.

"You'll come and have a little talk with me, won't you, Sandy?" she

pleaded. "I'll wait for you as long as you like."
 "After I've seen Stuyvesant awhile," he answered, hurriedly. "He isn't so well. I reckon he must have overdone it," and away he went with his springy step until he reached the forward end of the promenade, where he tapped at the stateroom door. The surgeon opened it and admitted him.

His eyes were grave and anxious when, ten minutes later, he reappeared. "Norris is with him," he said in low tone, as he looked down into the sweet, serious, upturned face. "He shouldn't have tried it. He fooled the doctors completely. I'll tell you more presently," he added, noting that Mrs. Wells, with two or three of the band, were bearing down upon him for tidings of the invalid, and Sandy had heard—as who had not?—the unfavorable opinions entertained by the sisterhood of his luckless, new-found friend.

"The doctor says he mustn't be both—I mean disturbed—wants to get him to sleep, you know," was his hurried and not too happy response to the queries of the three. "Matter of business he wanted to ask me about, that's all," he called back, as he broke away and dodged other inquiries.

Once in the little box of a stateroom to which he and a fellow subaltern had been assigned, he bolted the door, turned on the electric light, and took from under his pillow a packet of letters and sat him down to read. There was one from his mother, written on her way back to Leavenworth, which he pored over intently and then reverently kissed. Later, and for the second time, he unfolded and read the longest letter his father had ever penned. It was as follows:

"I have slipped away from camp and its countless interruptions and taken a room at the hotel to-night, dear Sandy, for I want to have a long talk with my boy—a talk we ought to have had before, and for which I am sorry. I shall write from it somehow, and now am sorry for it. Your frank and manly letter, telling me of your severe loss and of the weakness that followed, reached me two days ago. Your mother's came yesterday, fondler than ever and pleading for you as only mothers can. It is a matter that has cost us all dear financially, but thanks to that loving mother, you were promptly enabled to cover the loss and save your name. You know and realize the sacrifice she had to make, and she tells me that you insisted on knowing. I am glad you did, my boy. I am going to leave in your hands the whole matter of repayment."

"A young fellow of 20 can start in the army with many a worse handicap than a debt of honor and a determination to work it off. That steadies him. That matter really gives me less care than you thought for. It is the other—your giving way to an impulse to drink—that fills me with concern. You come up like a man, admit your fault, and say you deserve and expect my severe censure. Well, I've thought it all over, Sandy. My heart and my arms go out to you in your distress and humiliation, and I have not one word of reproach or blame to give you."
 "For now I shall tell you what I had thought to say when your graduation drew nigh, had we been able to master mechanics and molecules and other mathematical not as useful to a cavalry officer as a binocular to a blind man, and that I ought to have told you when you started out for yourself as a young ranchero, but could not bring myself to it so long as you seemed to have no inclination that



HE READ THE LONGEST LETTER HIS FATHER HAD EVER PENNED.

way. Times, men, and customs have greatly changed in the last 40 or 50 years, my boy, and greatly for the better. Looking back over my boyhood, I can recall no day when wine was not served on your grandfather's table. The brightest minds and bravest men in all Kentucky pledged each other day and night in the cup that sometimes cheers and oftentimes inebriates, and no public occasion was complete without champagne and whiskey in abundance, no personal or private transaction considered auspicious unless appropriately wet."

"Those were days when our statesmen revelled in sentiment and song, and drank and gambled with the fervor of the followers of the races. I was a boy of tender years then, and often, with my playmates, I was called to join the merry games to join the gentlemen over their wine and drain a bumper to our glorious 'Harry of the West,' and before I went to the Point, Sandy, I knew the best, and possibly the worst, whiskey made in Kentucky. I did—and the man or youth who could not stand the glass of liquor was looked upon as a milkop, or pitted, and yet, after all, respected, as a 'singled cat'—a fellow who owned that John Barleycorn was too much for him, and he did not dare a single round with him."

"Then came the great war, and wars are always in one way demoralizing. West Point in the early sixties was utterly unlike the West Point of to-day, and no worse than a dozen of our greatest colleges. The corps still had its tales and traditions of the old-time Fourth of July dinners at the mess hall, when everybody made a dash for the decanters and drank everything in sight. It was the only day in the year on which wine was served. It was in my time the invariable custom for the superintendent to receive the board of visitors on the day of their arrival at his quarters and to invite the officers and the graduating class to meet them in the set forth, as for years had been the fashion at Washington, wine and punch in abundance, and the very officers detailed as our instructors would laughingly invite and challenge the youngsters so soon to shed the gray and wear the blue to drink with them again and again. I have seen dozens of the best and bravest of our fellows come reeling and shouting back to barracks and a thrice-dusted set of boys laughing and applauding."

"I was stationed at the Point soon after graduation, and the men who drank were too rule, not the exception. Social visits were rarely exchanged without the introduction of the decanter. The marvel is that so many were temperate in our meat

and drink," as my father and grandfather used to plead when, regularly every morning, the family and the negro servants were mustered for prayers. At every post where I was stationed, either in the east or where I was most at home—the far frontier—whisky was the established custom, and man after man, fellows who had made fine records during the war and bright boys with whom I had worn the gray at the Point, fell by the wayside and were court-martialed out of service."

"In '70 and '71 we had a board that swept the army like a sieve, and relegated scores of tipplers to civil life that didn't stop it. Little by little the sense and manhood of our people began to tell. Little by little the feeling against stimulants began to develop at the Point. It was no longer a joke to set a flogging officer to taste the tempter—it was a crime. Four years after I was commissioned we had one total abstainer out of some 50 officers at the mess, and he was a man whose life and honor depended on it. Three years ago, when I went to see you, there were dozens at the mess who never drank at all, only eight who even smoked. Athletics and rifle practice had much to do with this, I know, but there has gradually developed a new nobility in the communities where the custom used to be most honored in the observance, a total revulsion of sentiment."

"Quarter of a century ago even among men gently nurtured when the sight of a man overcome by liquor excited only sorrow and sympathy; now it commands nothing less than abhorrence. I and my surviving contemporaries started in life under the old system. You, my dear boy, are more fortunate in having begun with the new. Among the old soldiers there are still some few votaries of Bacchus who have to count their cups most carefully or risk their commissions. Among those under my army I have more total abstainers than all the others in the world, and such soldiers as Grant, Crook, Merritt and Upton, of our service, and Kitchener of Khartoum, are on record as saying that the staying powers of the teetotaler exceed those even of the temperate man, and staying power is a thing to cultivate."

"As you know, I have never banished wine from our table, my boy. Both your mother and I had been accustomed to seeing it. I mourn every hour I wasted over cards and every dollar I ever won from a comrade more than—much more than—the many hundred dollars I lost in my several years' apprenticeship to poker. It's just about the poorest investment of time a soldier can dispose of."

"Knowing all I do, and looking back over the path of my life, strewn as it is with the wrecks of fellow-men ruined by whiskey, I declare if I could live it over again it would be with the determination never to touch a card or for money or a glass for liquor."

"And now, my own boy, let me bear the blame of this—your first transgression. You are more to us than we have ever told you. You are now your sister's guardian and knight, for, though she goes under the wing of Mrs. Dr. Wells, and owing to her intense desire to take a woman's part, we could not deny her, both your mother and I are filled with anxiety as to the result. To you we look to be her shield in every difficult way. We have never ceased to thank God for the pride and joy He has given us in our children. (You yourself would delight in seeing what a tip-top little soldier Will is making.) You have ever been manly, truthful, and, I say it with pride and thankfulness, unswerving, as a boy could be. You have our whole faith and trust and love unspokeable. You have the best and fondest mother in the world, my son. And now I have not one more word to urge or advise. Think and decide for yourself. Your manhood under God will do the rest."

"In love and confidence, 'FATHER.'"

When Marion came tapping timidly at the stateroom door there was for a moment no answer. Sandy's face was buried in his hands as he knelt beside the little white berth. He presently arose, dashed some water over his eyes and brows, then shot back the bolt and took his sister in his arms.

CHAPTER X.

Not until the tenth day out from Honolulu was Mr. Stuyvesant so far recovered as to warrant the surgeons in permitting his being lifted from the hot and narrow bed to a steamer chair on the starboard side. Even then it was with the caution to everybody that he must not be disturbed. The heat below and in many of the staterooms was overpowering, and officers and soldiers in numbers slept upon the deck, and not a few of the Red Cross nurses spent night after night in the bamboo and wicker reclining chairs under the canvas awnings.

Except for the tropic temperature, the weather had been fine and the voyage smooth and uneventful. The Sacramento rolled easily, lazily along. The men had morning shower baths and, a few at a time, salt water plunges in big canvas tanks set fore and aft on the main deck. On the port or southern side of the promenade deck the officers sported their pajamas both day and night, and were expected to appear in khaki or serge, and consequent discomfort, only at table, on drill or duty, and when visiting the starboard side, which, about the captain's room, was by common consent given up to the women.

They were all on hand the morning that the invalid officer was carefully aided from his stateroom to a broad reclining-chair, which was then borne to a shaded nook beneath the stairway leading to the bridge and there securely lashed. The doctor and Mr. Ray remained some minutes with him, and the steward came with a cooling drink. Mrs. Wells, doctor by courtesy and diploma, arose and asked the surgeon if there were really nothing the ladies could do—"Mr. Stuyvesant looks so very pale and weak"—and the sisterhood strained their ears for the reply, which, as the surgeon regarded the lady's remark as reflecting upon the results of his treatment, might well be expected to be somewhat tart.

"Nothing to-day, Mrs.—er—Dr. Wells," said the army man, half vexed, also, at being detained on way to hospital. "The fever has gone and he will soon recuperate now, provided he can rest and sleep. It is

much cooler on deck and—if it's only quiet—"

"Oh, he shan't be bothered, if that's what you mean," interposed Dr. Wells, with proper spirit. "I'm sure nobody desires to intrude in the least. I asked for my associates from a sense of duty. Most of them are capable of fanning or even reading aloud to a patient without danger of overexciting him."

"Unquestionably, madam," responded the surgeon, affably, "and when such ministrations are needed I'll let you know. Good morning." And, lifting his stiff helmet, the doctor darted down the companionway.

"Brute!" said the lady doctor. "No wonder that poor boy doesn't get well. Miss Ray, I marvel that your brother can stand him."

Miss Ray glanced quietly from her book and smiled. "We have known Dr. Sturgis many years," she said. "He is brusque, yet very much thought of in the army."

But at this stage of the colloquy there came interruption most mercurial—for the surgeon. The deep whistle of the steamer sounded three quick blasts. There was instant rush and scurry on the lower deck. The cavalry trumpets fore and aft rang out the assembly.

It was the signal for boat drill, and while the men of certain companies sprang to ranks and stood in silence at attention awaiting orders, other detachments rushed to their stations at the life-rafts, and others swarmed up the stairways or clambered over the rails, and in less than a minute every man was at his post. Quickly the staff officers made the rounds, received the reports of the detachment commanders and the boat crews, and returning, with soldierly salute, gave the result to the commanding officer, who had taken position with the captain on the bridge.

For five or ten minutes the upper deck was dotted by squads of blue-shirted soldiers, grouped in disciplined silence about the boats. Then the recall was sounded, and slowly and quietly the commands dispersed and went below.

[To Be Continued.]

A THRIFTY PEOPLE.

What the Counselors of Queen Wilhelmina Insisted Upon from the Prince Consort.

The cautious Dutch legislators, says Curtis Brown, in Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly, undertook to see to it that the prince consort should be made to know his place. In the first place, they insisted that he should be naturalized and swear to fight against even the Fatherland in case his bride's people should go to war with Germany. That came hard for the young man, and there was a time shortly after the betrothal when it looked as if he would revolt. Perhaps the young queen came to the rescue and cajoled some of her unromantic advisers, for the conditions were somewhat modified, and although the duke finally became a full-fledged citizen of the Netherlands, it was provided that in case of the queen's death or of a separation he might go back and be a German again. Any children would, of course, be Dutch.

Then there was trouble over the title. Should the duke be king consort, and addressed as "Your Majesty?"

"Heaven forbid!" cried the socialist in parliament.

At last a sort of nondescript title was hit upon for a compromise, and the day before the wedding the duke was formally created "His Royal Highness the Prince of the Netherlands."

"Of course, he should have a salary," said the Dutch conservatives.

"Not a stiver!" said the socialists. The compromise in this case was even more odd than in the previous wrangle. The bridegroom is to receive nothing from the state as long as he is in the service of the state, but if the queen should die he will receive therefor after \$62,500 a year. The duke is said to have been rather disgusted by this thrifty enactment, which leaves him to be provided for by his wife. The queen, however, is rich in her own right, even for a queen. She also receives a salary more than seven times as big as that of the president of the United States, and has an income from crown lands that brings her a total from the state of almost \$5,000,000 a year.

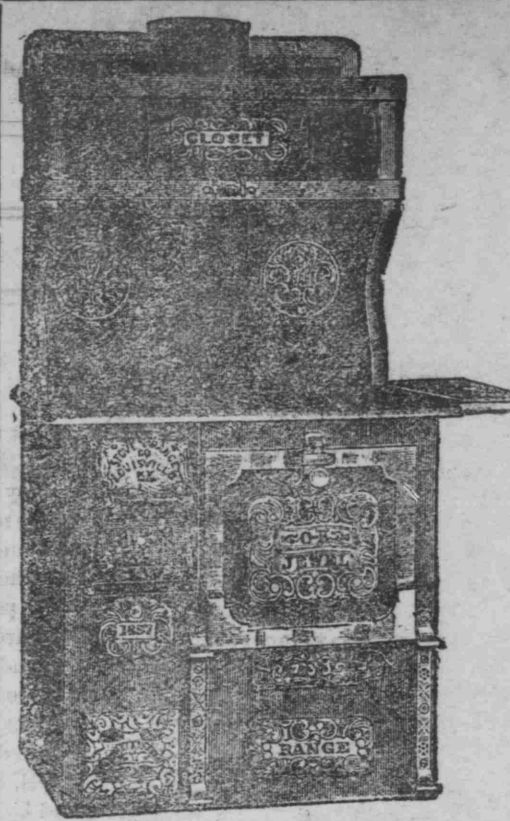
An Old Custom in Cloyne.

I have known two or three old priests in Cloyne diocese break up and distribute among the poor girls of their respective parishes their old and worn vestments, for the purpose of being made into "Saint Patrick's crosses." The cross thus made (from a priest's vestment) to people of simple faith was an object of veneration and I have known many such forwarded by their owners to their kindred in America, where they were doubtless received as welcome souvenirs of an ancient custom in the land of their fathers. Not a little curiosity is the etiquette of those children's "Saint Patrick's Crosses," for whereas it would be considered effeminate of a little boy to wear "a girl's cross," it would be considered most unbecoming on the part of the little miss to don a boy's paper cross.—Donahoe's.

Limited Space.

A queer sentence closes the inscription on a tombstone in a churchyard in Leigh, England. After announcing the name and other particulars of the lady there buried, these words follow: "A virtuous woman is worth 5s to her husband." The explanation is that space prevented "a crown" being cut in full, and the stonecutter argued that a crown equals five shillings.—Troy Times.

Moral: Don't Lend. You hardly expect a loaned article to come back as good as it was when you loaned it.—Washington (D. C.) Democrat.



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